

New Entry in a Major Series of Composer Discographies

Francine Bloch: Francis Poulenc. *Phonographies 2*: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, 1984. Pp. 255. Fr. 250.

As an indication of the effort devoted to this research, Mlle Bloch showed me a typescript of the work in progress when I visited the Phonothèque Nationale in 1977. Although she recently retired, she can still be seen there regularly. This new title adds to the promise implicit in François Lesure's *Fauré*, the first entry in *Phonographies* (reviewed here, XII:3), that a major institution will sponsor a properly produced series of discographies.

Besides a format which is identical in layout and production to the first number, Mlle Bloch has followed the principles laid out by M. Lesure in establishing the content of each entry. In an alphabetical arrangement which admits cross-references wherever one might look for an entry, the recordings are listed chronologically, with full names of participants, exhaustive lists of issue numbers, date of recording where known, date of issue for each number, and sigla for institutions holding copies. An appendix devoted to Poulenc as interpreter is added, and there is an index of interpreters, as well as a list of the works grouped into seventeen categories. She has subtitled the book "1928-1982," beginning with the Trio with the composer at the piano.

The level of completeness and accuracy is very high. I missed the Aachen Cathedral Choir recording of the *Gloria*, made on October 5, 1975 (issued as F 666107/108 with a Haydn Mass). There are two entries for the Rome recording by Colacicchi of *Quatre Motets pour un Temps de Pénitence*, the organist being cited as conductor on the reissue. On the other hand, Debost's new version of the Flute Sonata (cited with its date of recording) should have been separated from the issues of the old version. On p. 99, Erato EFM 42017 has lost its final digit. On p. 49, the songs recorded by the Berkshire Boy Choir are Nos. 3, 4, and 2, and Siegmund Nimsgern is misidentified. Proprius PROP 7785 is shelved in the PN, but the recording date was not copied from the sleeve. These are exceptions to the prevailing admirable approach.

The task of tracking down full names of artists is not likely to be completed in a work of this size, and the present state of affairs is a credit to Mlle Bloch, but more names could have been supplied, a few from common sources such as Kurtz Myers' *Index to Record Reviews*, many from such places as the index to John Bennett's *Melodiya*. The following may be noted: Ernest Bourmauck (found in the *Fauré phonographie*), Vitali Buyanovsky, Robert Cowan, Theodore De Colo, Hans Dercksen, Jan Maria Dobrodinsky, Raymond Droulez, Fernand Dufrène, Paul Freeman, Jean-Gabriel Gaussens, Livingston Gearhart, John Gillespie, Josef Hala, David Hancock, Volker Hempfling, Thomas Hryniv, Kira Izotova, Maria Karandashova, Christoph (not P.) Klein, Sergei Krasavin, Oleg Kudryashov, Bert (or Humbert) Lucarelli, Valentin Malkov, Gaston Marchesini, John Moriarty, Anatoli Nikitin, Ernst Panenka, Yvonne Perrin, René Plessier, George

Rucite, Brian Runnett, Tamara Samoilovich, Sauljus Sondeckis, Thomas Stevens, Aleksandr Sveshnikov, Laura Tikhanova, Victor Venglovsky, Michael Voskressensky, Joseph Vrankens, Carol Wincenc, Joan Yarbrough, Nadezhda Yureneva, and Bernard Zighera. It should be remembered that this comes from a list of some 1200 artists, and that I managed to complete the names of less than half of the hundred or so that were incomplete.

Mlle Bloch credits five firms with furnishing recording dates, but there are several major American and British companies that might have been equally obliging if she had contacted them. The contents include not only commercial recordings but other records of more limited circulation, as well as many broadcasts preserved on tape in public archives, especially (of course) in France.

The preface offers an appreciation of Poulenc's recordings, quoting his comments on several of them, and of his interpreters. A precise list is given of published sources -- catalogues and periodicals -- on which the compilation was based. Lists of individuals who furnished assistance and abbreviations used in the text are also given. Since records are cited by label and number, a list of labels by country is given for further identification. As in the previous number of the series, typefaces are varied with large and small capitals and italics, though not as deftly as in WERM, which also used boldface judiciously.

Without a doubt, this compilation is a worthy account of Francis Poulenc on records. It deserves wide circulation and belongs in every reference collection. The price is not cheap, due perhaps to the rather limited distribution from the Bibliothèque Nationale itself, a fault which the institution might take steps to remedy. The work is entirely in French, but apart from the preface this is no obstacle to anyone who can read a record catalogue and make out the titles of compositions and names of musical instruments in another language.

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